

MEETING REPORT NO. 17

PROJECT: **Town of Needham Downtown Study**

DATE: 18 June 2007

LOCATION: Broadmeadow School

PRESENT: Downtown Study Committee (DSC)

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|------------------|---|
| Kate Fitzpatrick | Town Manager |
| Jack Cogswell | Board of Selectmen |
| Bob Smart | Cochair, DSC Committee |
| Moe Handel | Cochair, Planning Board |
| Lee Newman | Planning Director |
| Nicole Bourassa | Assistant Planner |
| Joyce Moss | Economic Development Officer |
| Mark Gluesing | Design Review Board |
| Kathy Lewis | Needham Business Association |
| Jeanne McKnight | Planning Board & League of Women Voters |

Communities Opportunities Group

Judi Barrett

DiNisco Design Partnership (DDP)

Kenneth DiNisco
Jon Oxman

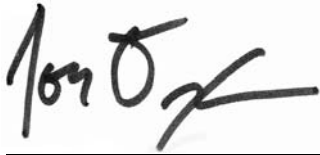
1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this meeting was to review materials prepared for Community Workshop #2.

2. COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #2 PREPARATIONS

- 2.1. The DSC reviewed a Draft Agenda, and Questionnaire. These will be revised based on comments made by the DSC.

The discussions of this meeting are recorded as understood by the writer. Please advise the writer of any omissions or corrections.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Oxman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jon Oxman AIA
DiNISCO DESIGN

JAO/jc

cc: DSC
Kenneth DiNisco
Richard Rice

Enclosure: 1. Handouts: Community Workshop #2 DRAFT Agenda and DRAFT Questionnaire (06/18/07).

Imagine Needham Center

Town-wide Visioning Session

Downtown Study Committee

June 25, 2007

Workshops No. 2

Agenda

7:00 pm

Introduction and Welcome

- **Description of the Planning Process**
Robert T. Smart Jr., Downtown Study Committee
Needham Center Planning Study Committee

7:10 pm

Review of Work Completed to Date

- **Community Goals and Objectives**
Ken DiNisco, DiNisco Design Partnership
- **Build-Out Analysis**
Judi Barrett, Community Opportunities Group
- **Traffic/Market Analysis**
Ken DiNisco
- **Proposed Concept Plan**
Ken DiNisco

8:00 pm

Small Group Discussion

- **General** (10 min)
- **Concept Plan** (30 min)
 - Overall Concept Plan
 - Highland Avenue Business District
 - Center Business District
 - Chestnut Street Business District
- **Areas of Potential Development** (20 min)

9:00 pm

Report Back to Large Group

- **Discussion**

9:20 pm

Ballot Vote

9:30 pm

Closing Comments / Next Steps

NEEDHAM DOWNTOWN STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE
July 25, 2007

Stakeholder Interest

Please circle the category listed below which best describes your relationship to the three zoning districts being studied: Center Business, Chestnut Street Business, Highland Business:

Property owner

Business owner

Resident near the three districts

Resident at large

Questions

Circle the answer which best describes your response.

Center Business District

1. The current height limit of buildings is 35 feet (2 1/2 stories).

a. Q: *Should that height limit be increased to 37 feet (3 stories)?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

b. Q: *Should the height limit be increased to 48 feet (4 stories) if the top floor is set back or sloped from the edge of the building?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

Chestnut Street Business District

2. The current height limit of buildings is 35 feet (2 1/2 stories).

a. Q: *Should that height limit be increased to 37 feet (3 stories)?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

b. Q: *Should the height limit be increased to 48 feet (4 stories) if the top floor is set back or sloped from the edge of the building?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

3. Q: *Should the town encourage significant expansion of Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital and the services it provides?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

4. Q: *Should the town encourage the development of medical office buildings in the vicinity of the hospital?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

Highland Avenue Business District

5. The current height limit of buildings is 40 feet (3 stories).

a. Q: *Should that height limit be retained?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

b. Q: *If the answer is "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree", should the town establish new density rules similar to Avery Square, effectively limiting height to 35 feet and 2 1/2 stories, and limiting bulk to 70% as much floor area as area of the lot?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

6. Q: *Should that height limit be increased to 48 feet (4 stories) if the top floor is set back or sloped from the edge of the building?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

7. Q: *Should the district be redeveloped with limitations in place that ensure compatibility with the scale of residential surrounding and which limit the degree to which traffic volumes may grow?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

8. Q: *Should the district be redeveloped to give pedestrian convenience and amenity special importance?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

All Three Districts

9. Q: *Should the town encourage significant development and/or redevelopment?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

10. Q: *Should the town relax height restrictions further than previously described if these are demonstrated to be a significant impediment to redevelopment?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

11. Buildings in the three districts are required to be set back 50 feet from any abutting residential district boundary.

Q: *Should the town consider allowing exceptions or a reduction in this setback requirement for all districts if this will make redevelopment more likely **and if appropriate conditions** protecting abutting residents are imposed?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

What sort of conditions?

12. The town currently has **non-binding** building design guidelines for the Center Business District.

*Q: Should the town consider establishment of similar **non-binding** building design guidelines for the Chestnut Street Business and Highland Avenue Business Districts?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

13. *Q: Should the town consider establishment of **binding** building design guidelines for the three districts in exchange for increased height and story standards?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

14. *Q: Should the town encourage construction of one or more parking structures if these are demonstrated to be a significant incentive to development and increased tax base?*

Strongly Agree • Agree • Disagree • Strongly Disagree

The attached map shows potential parking locations discussed in the presentation. Indicate by a number (no. 1 highest, etc) your preference for location of parking structures.

Other Comments

Please state any comments or questions you may have about the Concept Development Plan presented by the Downtown Study Committee:

[illegible]